

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE
PROVIDING BREAK POINTS IN VIRUS SCANNING OPERATION

A computer virus scanning system is described in which during the scanning operation
5 a measurement value indicative of the amount of data processing performed is calculated and
this measurement value used to trigger breaks in the virus scanning operation. The triggered
breaks can be used to perform a determination as to whether or not the virus scanning
operations should be early terminated. One possibility is to measure the total size of the data
processed during the virus scanning operation and calculate a ratio of this compared to the
10 size of the computer file being virus scanned. If this calculated ratio exceeds a predetermined
threshold, then virus scanning may be terminated. Another possibility is to associate a
complexity value with each of a plurality of tests applied in the virus scanning operation. A
total for these complexity values may be used to trigger the breaks and also to trigger early
termination upon exceeding of respective threshold levels.

[Figure 3]